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1951

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the

URBAN DISTRICT

(Municipal Borough)

OF ROMSEY

The Romsey Press Limited

ANNUAL REPORT

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URBAN DISTRICT (Municipal Borough) OF ROMSEY

YEAR 1951

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Romsey.

In accordance with my statutory duty I submit for your information and consideration my Report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Borough of Romsey for the year 1951.

The Report is divided into 7 sections.

A.—Statistics and social conditions of the area.
B.—General provision of Health Services.
C.—Sanitary circumstances in the area.
D.—Housing.
E.—Administration.
F.—Inspection of and supervision of food and its production.
G.—Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

Staff:

Medical Officer of Health	A. C. MACKENZIE, M.D., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	JOHN DAVIES, M.I.MUN.E., F.R.I.C.S., M.R.S.I.
Sanitary Inspector	R. D. MORRIS, M.R.S.I.
Rodent Officer	V. HOW
Secretary	Miss D. RUSSELL

SECTION A. Statistics and social conditions of the area.

Area (in acres)	1212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar General) ...	6283
Rateable Value	£42,379
Sum represented by 1d. rate	£168
Number of Council Houses built before September, 1939...	182
,, ,, ,, ,, ,, after January, 1945 ...	164
The Council also owns 11 Flats and 4 Cottages	
Total number of occupied houses	1902

As the Borough houses a Brewery, Paper Mills and a Jam Factory, as well as the usual sources of employment of a Country Town, unemployment is not a problem at present

Summary of Vital Statistics for the year, 1951.

As supplied by the Registrar General.

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births—			
Total Registered	69	56	125
Legitimate...	65	54	119
Illegitimate	4	2	6
Still Births—			
Total	0	2	2
Legitimate...	0	1	1
Illegitimate	0	1	1
Deaths—			
Total Registered	41	46	87
Maternal Mortality			
Death from Puerperal causes—			
Puerperal Pyrexia		0	0
Other Puerperal causes		0	0
Total		0	0
Infant Mortality			
Death of Infants under 1 year of age—			
Total Registered	2	3	5
Legitimate	2	3	5
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Death of Infants under 4 weeks of age—			
Total Registered	2	2	4
Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0

Comparative Statistics (where available)—

	Romsey	England & Wales
Birth rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	19.9	15.5
Still birth, rate per 1,000 population ...	0.32	0.36
Still birth, rate per 1,000 live and still births ...	15.7	22.7
Maternal Mortality—rate per 1,000		
Total (live and still) births—		
All causes	Nil	.79
Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age—		
All Infants per 1,000 live births	40.0	29.6
Death rates per 1,000 estimated average population—		
Total	13.8	12.5
Tuberculosis Pulmonary	0.0	—
Non-Pulmonary	0.16	—
Cancer	2.07	—
Measles	Nil	—
Diphtheria	Nil	0.00
Enteritis under 2 years, per 1,000 live births ...	Nil	1.4
Pneumonia	.16	61

SECTION B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. *Public Health affairs of the Authority.*

The Medical Officer of Health is also Medical Officer of Health to Romsey and Stockbridge Rural District Council and an Assistant County Medical Officer of the Hampshire County Council. This arrangement helps in the co-ordination of the services supplied by the County Council and those supplied by this Council.

The Chief Sanitary Inspector and Assistant Sanitary Inspector are also the Engineer and Surveyor and the Assistant Engineer and Surveyor to the Council.

Food inspection is carried out with the co-operation of a Veterinary Surgeon.

2. *Nursing in the Home.*

There is no nursing arrangement or contribution made by the Council but two members represent the Council on the District Health Sub-Committee of the County Council.

3. *Laboratory Facilities.*

These are available at the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Royal Hants County Hospital, Winchester, the M.R.C. Laboratory, Southampton and the Pathology Department, Salisbury General Infirmary.

4. *Ambulance Service.*

This service is supplied by the County Council.

5. *Hospital Service.* (Regional Hospital Board).

General, Maternity and Infectious Diseases (including Tuberculosis and Smallpox) Hospital accommodation is available in Romsey, Salisbury, Southampton and Winchester.

6. *Welfare.*

Ante Natal and Child Welfare Clinics are held in Romsey and a Home Help service is available. These services are also supplied by the County Council.

SECTION C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Report of the Borough Engineer, Surveyor and Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Water

The area is supplied with a piped supply by the Southampton Corporation from their Waterworks Pumping Station at Timsbury. The quality of the water is good and the supply "constant". A few houses in isolated areas still obtain their supply from shallow wells which are liable to contamination and inadequate. The numbers of these houses have been reduced as opportunity offers.

Drainage and Sewerage.

During the year under review 132,648,350 gallons of sewage were pumped to the Sewage Works at Greenhill to receive treatment. The increase, despite the reduced rainfall and dry summer with its consequent saving on infiltration is attributed to the completion and occupancy of the new post-war houses within the year in the Town, the provision of baths and sanitary accommodation being contributory.

The quantity dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 363,400 gallons, which is the discharge expected from a population of 12,120 persons at an allowance of 30 gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 80,205,850 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 417,800 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 13,930 persons. During the six summer months 52,442,500 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 271,600 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 9,055 persons, allowing in both instances 30 gallons per head per day.

The plans and reports for the complete overhaul and extension of the Sewage Works is now at the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The enquiry that will be called is eagerly awaited and may possibly take place towards the latter half of 1952. The need for this overhaul and extension of the works is vital for the well-being of Romsey and every opportunity should be taken to press on with the work as soon as approved by the Minister.

Whitenap Sewerage.

The survey, plans and reports have been completed and all the detail work for the extension of the sewers to the Whitenap area. These have been approved by Council and despatched to the Minister of Housing and Local Government and it is hoped that the enquiry will be held by the Minister at the same time as that held into the Disposal Works. The sewering of this area will fill a very urgent need in securing the proper sanitary arrangement of drains and the elimination of cesspools in an already urbanised area and make available considerable more land for immediate development within the Borough boundary.

Rivers and Streams.

In the area they are reasonably free from pollution and there are no cases to report.

Closet Accommodation.

The district, except in a few isolated cases, is on water carriage system.

Public Cleansing.

The service is covered by Direct Labour over the whole of the district and mechanical transport is used. All premises are visited once per week, and in certain cases where the waste is heavy and highly putrescent, collections are made more frequently during the week. The arrangements are satisfactory and the work well organised. All the highways receive weekly cleansing, the main roads being cleansed by arrangements with the County Council who contribute towards the cost. 96 loads of street sweepings with an estimated weight of 250 tons were collected during the year. The refuse collected is taken to the Controlled Tip at Timsbury, and after sorting it is tipped into excavated disused gravel pits. Constant precautions are taken against vermin and rat infestation.

Sanitary Inspection in the Area.

Inspection of the District has been carried out as often as possible. General sanitary circumstances of the shops and compliance with the Shops Act, 1934, are complied with, and no action has been necessary with any shop during the course of the year. The total number of Sanitary Inspections amounted to 283 and 141 nuisances were discovered and subsequently abated. During the year 7 fumigations were carried out after cases of infectious disease.

Camping Sites.

No sites were used for camping purposes during the year. Estimated number of campers resident in the area at any one time—none.

Smoke Abatement.

No complaints were received during the year. The Borough has few factories.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

Bathing for members of the male sex has for a great number of years by use and custom taken place in a portion of the Fishlake Stream, towards the upper reaches. The river is continually flowing—the source of supply being the River Test.

The Corporation possess a modern open-air Swimming Pool, equipped with modern purification plant. The Pool is well managed and patronised. Samples of Pool water are taken at frequent intervals for bacteriological and chemical examinations. Records are kept and no adverse reports have been received.

During the year the number of persons using the Pool were as follows :—

Bathers—Schoolchildren	4,801
Season Ticket Holders	2,646
Spectators	493
Other (paid admission)	1,285

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

Number of Council Houses found to be infested ...	0
Other Houses do.	4
Number of fumigations carried out during the year ...	7

SECTION D. Housing.

1. *New Buildings and Housing.*

58 building plans were submitted for approval during the year, as follows:

15 for the erection of new houses.
20 for the improvement of existing houses.
18 for the improvement of business premises.
5 for the erection of garages.

58

As reported in previous years the standard of fitness for more than 50% of the property suitable for housing in the Borough is well below the standard recommended by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and more than 20% in such a state of dilapidation as to be incapable of repair at reasonable expense.

The preliminary survey of the Town, undertaken for Town and County planning purposes, and conducted by the County Planning Department, further confirms this state and shews that approximately 1,200 persons are in need of re-housing. In addition more than 300 applications for Council Houses have been received from families living in overcrowded conditions, and a continued new housing programme is more than ever justified. The new planning proposals for re-development of the Borough, now in the course of preparation, should enable the Council to anticipate the degree of clearance and demolition that will be required. When opportunity presents itself for the clearance of the

more dilapidated of these dwellings, it should be taken with determination and the persons re-housed. Many of these dwellings are now beyond any economic repair and have no architectural merit whatever. It is appreciated, in a town like Romsey a firm decision on slum clearance will require courage and the conviction of high principles.

The repair and maintenance of the Council's properties by the Council's own workmen has proved to be expeditious. Repairs are promptly and satisfactorily done, and a saving on office administration and additional supervision that would be entailed if passed out to contractors.

The work on housing sites and the construction of new houses has progressed reasonably well. The work on Hillside Avenue, 24 Flats should be commenced in the early part of next year and the completion of the Chambers Avenue site by 4 houses should also be in hand. Work has commenced on the Priestlands Estate in the preparation of the plans and working drawings and should be ready for a contractor's start by August or September, 1952.

SECTION E. Administration.

A considerable volume of technical work is undertaken by the Department and the number of delegated duties continue to increase. It is still found necessary to spend a considerable amount of overtime, outside of office hours, to keep the work anything like up-to-date. The office facilities are still very poor

SECTION F. Inspection of Foods and Production.

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report, 1951.

1. *Meat.*

Animals slaughtered in the Borough during the year consisted of 6 pigs, 4 calves and 1 sheep, all of which were passed fit for human consumption. The Slaughter Licence for one butcher was renewed. Certain quantities of meat were condemned in the shops and destroyed when found unfit for human consumption. Several consignments of tinned imported hams were dealt with in this way during the summer months.

2. *Other Foodstuffs.*

Two boxes of fish were condemned as unfit, due to delay in delivery from the railway. Two barrels of pig offal imported) were similarly dealt with. One ton and a half of macaroon biscuits were found unfit for human consumption, and these I passed over to Duke's Mills for reconstitution into animal feeding stuff.

3. *Shops and Vehicles.*

The cleanliness in the shops has been maintained, and the condition of refrigerators and containers satisfactory. There has been slight improvement in the condition of vehicles delivering meat and offal in the Borough.

SECTION G. Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

The incidence of infectious diseases was as follows:—

Cases of infectious disease notified to the Medical Officer of Health :—

Measles	220
Scarlet Fever	2
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1
Chicken Pox	6

An extensive epidemic of measles from an undiscovered source started in October, 1951 and continued into 1952. Fortunately most cases were mild. No deaths occurred and only 4 cases were notified as having been admitted to hospital. There were no outbreaks of food poisoning reported.

A close watch was kept for cases of influenza during the first quarter of the year when there was an epidemic of this disease in the Midlands and North of England, but no cases were notified and the epidemic did not apparently spread to this part of the country.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases notified during 1951 :—

Pulmonary—		Non-Pulmonary—	
Male ...	6	Male ...	3
Female ...	0	Female ...	2
	6		5

A Mass Radiography survey of the population of Romsey and the surrounding areas was made by the South West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board Mass Radiography unit which was stationed at the Romsey and Stockbridge Rural District Offices for one week. 1,593 persons were examined, 12 active cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were discovered, 91 cases of non-tuberculous pulmonary abnormalities were noted.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Deaths.

Pulmonary—		Non-Pulmonary—	
Male ...	0	Male ...	0
Female ...	1	Female ...	0
Total ...	1	Total ...	0

Diphtheria Immunisation.

At the end of 1951, the number of children immunised at any time was :—

Born 1951 ...	10
,, 1950 ...	69
,, 1949 ...	79
,, 1948 ...	128
,, 1947 ...	101
,, 1942—1946	332
,, 1937—1941	379

The estimated population in mid 1951, of 515 children under 5 and 895 children of 5—14 indicate that 75% of the younger age group and 79% of the older age group have been immunised.

Causes of Death in Romsey Urban District, 1951.

Causes of Death	*Males*	*Females*
ALL CAUSES	41	46
Tuberculosis	0	1
Cancer	6	7
Vascular lesions of the nervous system ...	2	8
Heart Diseases	11	16
Other Circulatory Diseases	2	1
Bronchitis	4	2
Pneumonia	1	0
Other Respiratory Disease	0	0
Ulcers Stomach and Duodenal	0	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	1
Congenital injuries, etc.	0	1
Suicide	0	0
Road Traffic	0	0
Other Violent	0	0
All Others	15	8

Yours faithfully,

A. C. MACKENZIE,

Medical Officer of Health.